

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE PRIORITY
CINCPAC PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 047752

USEEC; USGATT; FROM HOLBROOKE TO THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: ECON, ASEAN

SUBJECT:US-ASEAN DIALOGUE

REF: (A) MANILA 2401; (B) MANILA 2849

1. I MET ON FEBRUARY 17 AT AMBASSADOR ZAIN'S RESIDENCE
WITH ASEAN AMBASSADORS AND, ASKED AMBASSADORS TO CONVEY
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TO THEIR GOVERNMENTS OUR BELIEF THAT ASEAN-US RELATIONS
WOULD BENEFIT MORE FROM A WASHINGTON MEETING AT THE
MINISTERIAL LEVEL. I SAID THAT IF ASEAN SHARES THIS
VIEW WE WOULD ENDEAVOR TO HAVE THE SECRETARY OF STATE
HEAD THE U.S. DELEGATION AND WILL SEEK SECRETARY BLUMEN-
THAL'S PARTICIPATION. WHEN PRESIDENT CARTER MET WITH
NEW INDONESIAN AMBASSADOR ASHARI, HE ALSO EXPRESSED HOPE

THAT HE COULD IN SOME WAY PARTICIPATE IN MEETING IF ASEAN MINISTERS WERE TO COME TO WASHINGTON. WE WOULD ALSO HOPE THAT ASEAN MINISTERS WOULD MEET WITH CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS AND WITH IMPORTANT PUBLIC OPINION LEADERS FROM MEDIA, BUSINESS AND ACADEMIA. I TOLD AMBASSADORS THAT IN OUR VIEW OUR RELATIONS WITH ASEAN MEMBER COUNTRIES HAVE DIMENSION WHICH GOES BEYOND STRICTLY ECONOMIC; THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ASEAN SHOULD BE HEARD AND SEEN MORE PROMINENTLY IN THE U.S. MOREOVER, HIGH-LEVEL INVOLVEMENT ON THE U.S. SIDE WOULD ALSO BE BENEFICIAL IN ELICITING SUPPORT FOR SOME OF THE ECONOMIC ISSUES ON WHICH ASEAN SEEKS PROGRESS. I SAID WE DO NOT WISH TO DICTATE TO ASEAN AND WE WILL ABIDE BY THEIR DECISION BUT THIS IS THE WAY WE SEE HOW WE CAN BEST SERVE ASEAN'S INTERESTS.

2. ZAIN SAID THAT IN HIS INTERPRETATION, THE STANDING COMMITTEE DELIBERATIONS AND DECISION TO SEEK MEETING AT OFFICIAL LEVEL IS PRIMARILY MOTIVATED BY BELIEF THAT MINISTERS SHOULD NOT COME TO WASHINGTON UNLESS THEY CAN SHOW SOME "TANGIBLE RESULTS" FROM THEIR MEETING. WE POINTED OUT THAT WE ARE AWAITING ASEAN'S RESPONSE TO OUR OFFER TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC AID PROJECTS; THAT WE COULD MAKE SOME PROGRESS ON FACILITATION OF BUSINESS CONTACTS, ESPECIALLY SETTING UP US-ASEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL UNDER US CHAMBER AUSPICES, AND THAT CABINET CONFIDENTIAL

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LEVEL PARTICIPATION ON OUR SIDE WOULD MORE LIKELY ENERGIZE BUREAUCRACY TOWARD MORE FORTHCOMING POSITIONS AND POSSIBLE NEW INITIATIVES. I ADDED THAT ALL PARTIES SHOULD BE CAREFUL TO AVOID DISRUPTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGULAR RELATIONSHIP BY MAKING EXCESSIVE DEMANDS.

3. ZAIN ALSO RAISED THE QUESTION OF GETTING REPLIES TO THE 11 ASEAN MEMORANDA. WE SAID THAT AT END OF MANILA MEETING ASEAN SPOKESMAN COMPLIMENTED HEAD OF US DELEGATION FOR HIS EXTENSIVE AND OPEN RESPONSE TO ALL THE ISSUES RAISED IN THOSE MEMORANDA AND THEREFORE WE DID NOT REALIZE THAT ASEAN WAS AWAITING MORE FORMAL REPLY BUT THAT WE WILL NOW UNDERTAKE TO RESPOND IN WRITING WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.

4. WE SUGGESTED THE BEST TIME FOR WASHINGTON MEETING MIGHT BE TOWARD END OF JULY WHEN SECRETARY'S CALENDAR APPEARS OPEN; CONFERENCE FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE AND WHEN IT MIGHT BE BEST TO HAVE CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS. LATER DATES, E.G. SEPTEMBER WHICH COINCIDES WITH UNGA AND BANK AND FUND MEETINGS WOULD LOWER ASEAN VISABILITY. BUT AGAIN IT IS A MATTER

FOR ASEAN TO DECIDE.

5. AMBASSADOR ZAIN AND THE OTHER CHIEFS OF MISSIONS
AGREED THAT THEY WILL REPORT ALONG THESE LINES TO
THEIR CAPITALS. ZAIN ASKED THAT WTNATSO MAPE
REPRESENTATIONS ALONG THESE LINES IN THE CAPITALS AND
THEREFORE I REQUEST THAT YOU FOLLOW UP WITH FOREIGN
MINISTER AND/OR APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC MINISTERS AND
PRESENT OUR VIEWS AS STATED ABOVE.

VANCE

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